

DEADLY ILLNESS SEIZED MRS. MILLS AFTER DRINK OF COFFEE IN HALL HOME

Charlotte Recalls Mother Hinted at Dread of Poison

Could Charlotte Mills have prevented the death of her mother, who was slain with the Rev. Edward Hall on a lonely New Jersey farm? During four years fears and doubts have haunted her. Now she reveals the secrets of her heart. She tells, too, how her mother was a great admirer of Mrs. Hall, wife of the man she loved, and how Mrs. Mills became seriously ill after drinking a cup of coffee given her by Mrs. Hall.

My Own Story of My Mother's Love and Murder

Charlotte Mills

STRANGE HAPPENING

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I have told how wrapped up in the church my mother always had been, long before Mr. Hall came to New Brunswick, and how it all began with mere friendliness which gradually—oh, not for a long time was it anything but friendship—became something more.

Mother was always an admirer of Mrs. Hall, because, as I have also said, Mrs. Hall was very much of a lady, very refined, very reserved and very much respected, even though not so very much loved.

For a good many years my mother used to make presents to Mrs. Hall of fine needlework. Mother was an expert in embroidery, Mexican drawn work, eyelet work, all sorts of beautiful and difficult patterns. My aunts and my dad often would say:

"Why do you give all those things to Mrs. Hall? She has so much. You work your fingers to the bone and never keep any of it for yourself."

Mrs. Hall Pleased

And mother would laugh and promise to "keep some of it in the family." But always when she made a new piece off it would go to Mrs. Hall for a Christmas present, or Easter or birthday, and mother seemed to enjoy it more that way than by keeping it. Mrs. Hall seemed pleased, too, and always said nice things.

She knew mother was crazy about flowers and used to invite her to her gardens, for she had every kind of flower and shrub there, and sometimes gave garden fetes and had lots of guests. A strange thing happened about a year before mother died.

Mrs. Hall invited her to a small garden party. I remember how I tried to make mother dress up, for once, and put powder on and a touch of lipstick and rouge. She said she'd let me "play around" with my make-up and put it on her. I had a tiny box of rouge and a lipstick.

And once in a wild burst of adventure mother had bought a box of face-powder; up to that time she had always used talcum, which, as every woman knows, is worse than nothing on your face. It doesn't take the shine off and it always shows and looks silly. But mother wouldn't have anything

She Carried On



UPON THE DEATH of her mother the household work in the Mills homestead fell on the shoulders of Charlotte, shown above at kitchen stove. (Photo Graphic.)

else—until she got reckless and bought the box of face-powder for both of us. She made that box last three years, till it was a family joke.

Well, anyhow, she let me fix her up for the garden party, but when she gave one look at herself in the glass, she wiped off every bit of stuff I had put on and "went just plain, like I am." That's how she put it. She had on a new cotton voile dress, though, that she had made herself, and she started off as gay as anything.

After a while she came home—in one of the Hall cars, with Mr. Hall—and she looked like a ghost. Mr. Hall almost lifted her out of the machine, and she walked sort of totter and lightheaded.

She had no more than got inside the house than she was taken violently sick and we were nearly scared to death. Between spasms she told me not to worry, that she'd be all right in a little while, but she looked queer and I didn't know what to make of it all.

Mr. Hall stayed downstairs a few minutes with father and then went home, with a queer expression, I thought, on his face. I felt like rushing and putting my arms around him and asking him what it was all about, for he was always strong and kind, and you felt he could help you, no matter what was happening. Mother stayed sick like that for three days.

Dropped in Faint

It seems that after Mrs. Hall had shown her around through the flower beds, she invited her up on the porch and asked if she would like something to drink—iced tea or coffee, I think it was—and

mother said yes. She swallowed two or three sips, turned dead white, and dropped in a faint.

They had a hard time bringing her to, and when she got her senses again she had a feeling of death—that's what she told me after.

"Charlotte," she said, looking so queer, "I never felt so awful in my life; a sort of cold, sinking sensation and black, like dying."

There was an odd look about mother for days—quiet and frightened, sort of, and dazed. We didn't know what to make of it all. Mr. Hall called up very often and came around two or three times the next day and the next, and Mrs. Hall telephoned, I think.

Even my dad had nothing to say for once. I thought he would say, "I told you so," or something like that. But I think he was too puzzled and upset to say anything.

We all tried to put it out of our minds as soon as possible. Mother got all right at last and never spoke about it again after she explained to me what had happened and how she felt.

This whole episode was testified to by my aunt and is in the court records. I only mention it here for what it is worth. Whatever I might think would be brushed aside in court as mere prejudice or suspicion.

I have had to stop writing twenty times because I can't see the paper for tears. Nobody knows what this whole awful thing has done to me. Because I manage to go about my business without crying all the time people think I am hard. If they only knew how I spend some of my nights, alone in that upstairs room where mother and I used to sleep—thinking, thinking, thinking,

Shylock Homes Announces

The GRAPHIC is receiving so many hundreds of letters daily with theories and solutions of the Hall-Mills murder case that I am constrained to await the opening of the trial before continuing to print selected solutions.



The letters, Shylock Homes as they are received, are numbered, dated and filed, so that there will be no bungling as to selection of the successful solvers of this baffling crime.

The first correct solution of the Hall-Mills case that comes to The GRAPHIC will receive \$500. Then additional awards of \$250, \$100, \$50 and \$10 until the \$1,000 is exhausted, the correct solution based on court findings. You may send in as many solutions as you wish. None received AFTER OCTOBER 2. Address your letters to SHYLOCK HOMES, 25 City Hall Place, New York city.

my cousin, Harold Fick, and Miss Rastall went to the scene of the crime. I called for Miss Rastall and we drove to the farm. I parked my car on the lane and we walked to the crabapple tree, where the bodies were found."

Backs "Pig Woman"

"Did you speak to Miss Rastall about the parking of your car on Thursday, September 14?"

"I did say to her that if I had turned on my searchlight on Thursday night we would have seen something."

The vestryman was then asked if he had heard the same things which Mrs. Gibson previously had told of.

"I know her statement regarding mumbled voices, shots fired, screams and moaning," he continued. "They coincide with what I saw and heard while in De Russey's Lane."

These questions and answers, Inspector Underwood explained, were put in the form of an affidavit, which was signed and sworn to by Gorsline before he was permitted to leave the Somerville headquarters building after the all-night grilling.

Contract of Silence

The inspector also made public statements attributed to Miss Rastall, the first to break the contract of silence entered into between herself and Gorsline.

She told of accompanying Gorsline to De Russey's Lane, and described how the latter parked his car with the lights out. She said she had heard mumble voices, but could not distinguish how many persons were there. The voices, she added, appeared to be a couple of hundred yards away.

Miss Rastall explained that on the day the bodies were discovered Fick called on her and inquired if she wished to visit the scene. She declared she had been in the lane on several previous occasions, always at night.

Told Story to Minister

The young woman went on to say that after being questioned by the authorities she had visited the present pastor of the Episcopal Church of St. John the Evangelist and told him her entire story. He advised her to lay the whole thing before the proper authorities.

"Did you have a conversation with Mr. Gorsline in reference to the shots after September 14?" she was asked.

"Yes," was the reply, "on Sunday morning, I believe. We referred to the shots and thought they might have been the same shots that killed Dr. Hall and Mrs. Mills."

"Why did you keep quiet for four years and not mention this to any one?"

"Mr. Gorsline is a married man and we both agreed not to get mixed up in it."

"This is the first time you have told the whole truth?"

"Yes."

Of First Importance

The admissions wrung from Gorsline and Miss Rastall, coming as they did a few hours before impaneling of the grand jury which is to hear the evidence collected against Mrs. Frances Stevens Hall, widow of the slain rector; her brother, Willie, and their cousin, Henry Carpenter, is considered by Special Prosecutor Simpson and his aides as highly important.

It is probable that the task of bringing witnesses before the grand jury, with a view to having an indictment returned against the three now under arrest, will be started before the close of the afternoon.

Police frankly admitted that they now expect to solve the mystery murders through the statements of Gorsline and the choir singer, statements made after long hours of a grueling examination at state police headquarters in Somerville.

Gorsline Admits He Heard Shots

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Russey's lane about 10:15 p.m., drove through a ways and parked in the first crossroad.

"Did you hear any voices before the shots were fired?" was the next question.

"Yes," answered the witness. "I heard mumbled voices—they sounded like men's voices. They seemed to come from down back of the Phillips farm. My car was pointing toward the farmhouse and the voices seemed to be directly in front of us. We were there about ten minutes."

In reply to a query as to when he next saw Miss Rastall after the meeting in the church, Gorsline said:

"On Saturday afternoon, the day after the bodies were discovered. It was about 2:30 p.m. when I, my daughter, Jean, and